

# PROPOSAL EVALUATION

## Integrated Regional Water Management Implementation Proposition 50, Chapter 8 IRWM Implementation Step 1

**PIN:** 6986  
**APPLICANT NAME:** Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority (SAWPA)  
**PROJECT TITLE:** Santa Ana Integrated Regional Water Management Proposal

**FUNDS REQUESTED:** \$ 50,000,000  
**COST MATCH:** \$171,069,406  
**TOTAL PROJECT COST:** \$221,069,406

**DESCRIPTION:** The region contains sub-agencies and other water resource agencies representing over 5 million people residing in southern California's Santa Ana River watershed. The proposal was prepared through an ongoing collaborative stakeholder process headed by SAWPA to integrate and build upon regional planning efforts and considers a broad mix of local, regional, as well as, statewide plans and priorities. This proposal includes a broad range of projects to address the highest priority needs of the watershed. These include projects which reduce the demand for imported water, develop conjunctive use storage, expand groundwater and surface water storage, enable water transfers, capture stormwater, desalinate groundwater, control non-point source pollution, treat and improve water and wastewater, enhance flood protection, expand water recycling, as well as, create wetlands, restore habitat and support recreational opportunities.

**Question: Consistency with Minimum IRWM Standards - This evaluation will focus on whether the applicant has demonstrated that the IRWM Plan meets the minimum standards.**

Pass

**Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Adopted IRWM Plan and Proof of Formal Adoption. Weighting factor is 1.** 5

The Applicant submitted a resolution stating that their Board of Commissioners adopted the IRWMP and filed an application with DWR and SWRCB; signature is from the Chair.

**Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Description of Region. Weighting factor is 1.** 5

The region is the Santa Ana River Watershed. Many resources and characteristics of the watershed including hydrology, geomorphology, ecology, open space and recreation, water supply, water quality, flood control, social and cultural, demographics, and economics are discussed in IRWMP. Maps depicting various watershed characteristics are also provided. The applicant explains why region is appropriate for regional water management, describes water quantity and quality, and describes water supply and demand. Discussion of social and cultural topics could have explicitly stated.

**Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Objectives. Weighting factor is 1.** 4

The applicant listed topics that will: 1) update regional issues, 2) describe long-term solutions, 3) adapt to changes in member and member sub-agencies planning, 4) review 2010, 2025, and 2050 of water demands and supplies, 5) identify water resource projects, 6) integrate available resources, 7) include projects that enhance the environment, 8) assure that three years of groundwater storage is maintained in the Santa Ana River Basin by 2020, and 9) assure a salt balance. They were determined by a collaborative planning process that includes the applicant, member agencies, and other water resource agencies. As objectives they are rather generic and not sufficiently detailed. Major water related issues are discussed. There was no discussion on conflicts or impediments.

**Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Water Management Strategies and Integration. Weighting factor is 1.** 4

The IRWMP lists six elements: water storage, water quality improvements, water recycling, flood protection, wetlands/environment/habitat, and recreation/conservation. Under each strategy, there are multiple projects that are to be implemented by the applicant, member agencies, and other local agencies. The IRWMP discussed that these elements came from individual agencies and stakeholders in the watershed and that the applicant incorporated them for the region. This approach results in a broad mix of strategies to be implemented in the watershed and to serve individual agencies and the regional objectives, but the discussion failed to show the six strategies as integrated implementation. The applicant could have discussed a stronger connection between the projects rather than just projects' connection to the IRWMP.

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### Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Priorities and Schedule. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The IRWMP listed 185 total projects from 50 entities. The applicant selected priority projects using a seven step evaluation and the priority projects were pared down to 20 out of 185. The long- and short-term priority discussions while ambitious are also general. The applicant does not discuss how decision making would respond to future changes, or how project sequencing would be altered based on implementation responses.

### Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Implementation. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The IRWMP identifies actions, current projects and studies, and multiple task force activities, but does not discuss how they relate to the proposed priority projects. An overview schedule and individual timelines for each priority project are included. The applicant will be the entity responsible for implementation. The discussion of the economic and technical feasibilities of the priority projects could have been more detailed for each project. Considering the number and size of projects, showing the sequence for the projects to understand integration between projects would have been helpful.

### Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Impacts and Regional Benefits. Weighting factor is 1.

3

The IRWMP discusses how priority projects would provide potential positive impacts and multiple integrated benefits in region. Table 3-1 is an elaborate matrix trying to show how the priority projects will implement strategies and provide benefits. However, the discussion on integrated multiple benefits and negative impacts for the region could have been more concise. The applicant could have discussed impacts between projects rather than just projects' impact to the region. The IRWMP stated all priority projects were selected to support to some extent DACs but does not provide specifics. Brief discussions of evaluation of impacts/benefits to other resources are provided. SAWPA's IRWMP recognizes the OBMP as a tool that is being used to assure adequate groundwater yield and stop the spread of salt contamination in the Chino Basin. Several of the recycled water pipeline projects proposed in the application directly connect with and make specific reference to the OBMP.

### Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Technical Analysis and Plan Performance. Weighting factor is 1.

3

The IRWMP does not include a thorough discussion of data, technical methods, analyses, existing data gaps, or scientific measures used in plan development. Plan performance will be accomplished through CEQA review, schedule and budget tracking, site visits, documentation requirements, data collections, periodic reviews and evaluations, agreement deliverables, invoice procedures, audits, and project closeout procedures by the applicant. However, these performance measures do not adequately address how applicant and participating agencies will adapt to changes in project operation and implementation.

### Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Data Management. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The IRWMP states that the applicant, as administrator, will collect and provide project information/data, water quality and quantity information, maintain other programmatic information for analysis and future planning. IRWMP lists 8 on-going monitoring programs. The applicant will also provide status reports to the SWB and public but did not describe the mechanism for information dissemination. The IRWMP will support statewide data needs by integrating data with SWAMP and GAMA. A database management system, called SAWDMS, would standardize data, enable agencies on-line data access, serve as tool to improve water quality, integrate surface and groundwater data to assist numerous programs. Yet, the applicant could have provided more information on SAWDMS because it is the main tool.

### Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Financing. Weighting factor is 1.

3

Total project costs and grant requests are provided. However, there was no discussion of financing issues other than the IRWMP stating implementation is dependent on availability of outside funding. The applicant states it is actively seeking funding opportunities as they become available from Propositions 13 and 50, existing seed and partnership monies, agency general funds, program funds, and service fees. Funding sources and multiple partner agencies for each priority project are identified in the cost estimates, but it was not clear which entity or entities will actually fund each project. The applicant failed to address ongoing financing and other support for the future O&M of each priority project.

### Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Relation to Local Planning & Sustainability. Weighting factor is 1.

5

The IRWMP demonstrated coordination with local planning and management efforts. The IRWMP was developed in accordance with other applicable local and State plans including conservation, facilities, coastal, subregion, endangered species, environmental assessment, nutrient removal, watershed, and other plans and programs. The applicant states that the general plans for each of the watershed's three major counties and 59 cites form the cornerstone of policy development within the watershed.

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**Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Stakeholder Involvement & Coordination. Weighting factor is 1.**

5

The IRWMP demonstrated stakeholder involvement and coordination efforts are directed by the applicant and its member agencies. History of involvement and coordination with local, State, and federal level agencies were evident. Participation by grassroots organizations and DACs and environmental justice issues were addressed through the stakeholder process.

**Question: Funding Match. This evaluation will focus on whether the applicant has demonstrated the ability to meet the minimum funding match or has requested a waiver or reduction in the funding match.**

Pass

**Question: Description of Proposal. Weighting factor is 3.**

9

Project descriptions provide detail for each project and their accompanying sub-projects. However, the merit of the projects is not supported by feasibility studies, pilot projects, or other documentation. While each projects' cost estimates and schedules included line items for environmental compliance plans, the applicant could have provided more detail considering the large number of projects to be implemented. Each project description discussed relationship to IRWMP and linkages of strategies, but the applicant could have also discussed relationships between projects to show local linkages. The proposed Non-Profit Organization Block Grant (Project No. 906) may not fit the intent of IRWMP Step 1 program.

**Question: Project Prioritization. Weighting factor is 2.**

8

The selection process in the IRWMP was described including the physical and technical parameters that were used. The order or prioritization of projects in the proposal differs slightly from that in the IRWMP for the same projects. The applicant's evaluation process selected 19 priority projects. However, there are 20 in the IRWMP so why was one project removed? The sequencing of projects would be important considering they may not be constructed simultaneously or changes in operations may occur.

**Question: Cost Estimate. Weighting factor is 1.**

5

Cost estimates are provided (summary and 19 individual ones) and all appear to be consistent with their corresponding schedules. Summary project administration costs (0.045%), construction administration (4.2%), and construction/implementation contingencies (5.7%) seem reasonable. Matching funds equal 77.4%. Funding sources and partner agencies for each priority project are identified. There were minor inconsistencies or rounding errors for total project costs between IRWMP and the grant application.

**Question: Schedule. Weighting factor is 1.**

4

Schedules are provided (summary and 19 individual ones) and appear to be consistent with their corresponding cost estimates. Start and end dates vary for each individual project, but there was no overall sequence of the priority projects. Applicant demonstrates how related elements of IRWMP will be completed on schedule. Tasks and milestones in each schedule are vague and do not match project descriptions. The applicant should have provided breakdown on the funded and non-funded portions of each project.

**Question: Need. Weighting factor is 2.**

8

As the California's population increases, water saving and water reuse efforts will increase in importance. The applicant describes regional need to reduce imported water supply and drought-proof itself. The applicant and member agencies have basically the same needs. Local and regional economic, environmental, and fiscal impacts are discussed in application but not thoroughly

**Question: Disadvantaged Communities. Weighting factor is 2.**

6

The IRWMP and application state all priority projects were selected to support to some extent DACs. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the percentage of households considered to be DACs and estimates of the dollars supporting DACs for each project based upon agency service area. However, the applicant did not provide the documentation to explain and support how the estimated direct benefits to DACs were derived. Descriptions of DAC benefits are also provided for each project. DAC population data and MHI numbers were illustrated in the figures of the IRWMP, but DAC calculations according to the PSP are not provided.

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Question: Program Preferences. Weighting factor is 1.

5

The applicant's IRWMP and proposal meets program preferences by supporting and improving water reliability, water quality, and reduce pollutants and imported water. The IRWMP demonstrates integrated implementation with SAWPA's IRWMP and provides multiple benefits to the region. The Randall Basin Improvements project was separately identified by the applicant and SAWPA's IRWMP as a project that meets the groundwater project preference.

TOTAL SCORE: 94